

## **Newport & Gwent Philately**

**May 2009 Number 41**

### **Club News**

We extend a warm welcome to Tom Doyle and John Islip who have joined recently.

Our congratulations go to Bev Davies who has recently become secretary of the national Stamp Active Network. Bev does a lot of work with schools in South Wales. She also runs the stamp club at the Dell Primary School in Chepstow.



As many of you know, Gwen Hussey has been in the Royal Gwent Hospital since Easter. By the time you read this Newsletter, I hope that she will be back home. Gwen is due to host the summer meeting on 15 July at her house. If we need to change this I will contact you.

### **Recent meetings**

The debate on the future of the hobby, that has already been re-arranged twice, finally took place at the end of November (see below). The year ended with the usual "Ladies Evening". We are moving towards the end of the alphabet in our "Letter" nights. This year saw the big X challenge and everyone rose to it with some inventive ideas, including X-rated stamps. Two further members' evenings followed on thematics and on USA.

The annual competition in March had nine entries with winners being: Stuart Geddes with his Monmouth Penny Post (Postal History); Neil Jones with "New Zealand Victory Stamps" (General); and Dennis Martin with "Gibraltar Uniforms" (Thematic). There was no GB entry this year.

The visiting speaker this year was Neil Prior who provided a fascinating insight into the Klondyke gold rush, illustrating his talk with some early letters and postcards.

The annual visit from the Bridgend club had displays on Isle of Man camps in World War II from Nigel McGaw, GB inland postage rates by Brian Brandon and a selection of postcards from Maureen Phillips.

The following meeting saw Roy Holliss haul his Cover Love stock from the car-park to the first floor of the Civic Centre. Members then had a good two hours of rummaging in what was a thoroughly enjoyable evening, even for those who did not find anything to buy.

This was followed by a visit to the Barry club by Roy Bentley, Alistair MacKinnon and Martyn Britton. We were entertained next by a four man team from the Cardiff club. Unfortunately I had to miss both meetings because of my Edinburgh trip.

The final meeting before the AGM, saw our second (annual) one-page competition.



This attracted ten entries. The judging was along Eurovision Song Contest lines. Each member would cast three votes (3, 2 and 1 point) but could not vote for their own entry. This year the winner was Bernie Riff, picture above, with his "Dishes of the Day" entry.

Bev Davies brought four sheets from her school club, so we ran a parallel competition for the juniors. The four entries were all on a USA theme. Remarkably three of the entries had the same mark of 20, which meant that the tie-breaker of "most first places" came into play. Congratulations to all of the youngsters. Let's hope that they keep up their interest in the hobby.

## **There is no future for Stamp Collecting!**

At our end of November 2008 meeting, Gwen Hussey made some gloomy statements. With 19 million letters and parcels each day most of us would have lots of material, although nearly always without "stamps". Metermarks have been around for a long time and have been joined by the Ppi or pre-printed indicator "stamps". In 1984, we had a trial of printed machine labels. Even when you get a real stamp, it is often defaced by biro or an over-inked postmark that definitely obliterates the stamp.

Now when you go to the Post Office it is almost impossible to buy a stamp: all you get is a label. You can also buy "stamps" on-line, the so-called Smart stamp that you print yourself. OK, if you actually manage to buy a stamp, it now has glue you can't remove and so many cuts in the stamp that it disintegrates even if you can soak it off paper.

Well, even if you have stamps, have you tried selling them and got the response "it is not worth much, give it to a youngster?". Have you thought of investing, for example, by joining the Stanley Gibbons investment programme?

Is there any hope then for collectors?

## **South Wales Federation News**

The 2009 Convention took place at the Princess Theatre, Port Talbot on 2 May. I am chairman of the Federation this year and would have been at the Convention this year but for a family wedding in Edinburgh on the same day. The Newport club had two entries in the competitions gaining a gold for Stuart Geddes and a silver for Alistair Mackinnon. There were only five other entries, all from Swansea, by far the lowest turnout for any Federation competition.

The Swansea club will host the 2009 Autumn Day in celebration of their 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary on 3 October 2009. The date for the 2010 Convention is 22 May to fit in with national and other events.

## **Other dates for Your Diary**

On Saturday 30 May 2009, the Barry club will be running its summer stamp fair at the Highlight Centre next to Tesco's off the Port Road in Barry.

South Wales Postcard Club holds its next fair at the Star Centre in Splott Road Cardiff on Saturday 17 October 2009.

I will be displaying "Faroe Islands" to the Bristol Club on 12 November 2009. I will also be judging the

competition at the Thornbury club on 19 March 2010. If any other members are giving displays at other clubs, please tell me so that I can advertise them.

## **Stamp Magazine**

Some of you may have seen the four page article in the January 2009 Stamp Magazine in the "My Collection" series. It showed some elements of my rather too wide-ranging collection, focusing on the history of the Swedish American Line. If any club member would like to see their collection featured in those pages, I can provide some guidance.

## **Welsh Philatelic Society**

Five members of the Newport club attended the Welsh Philatelic Society meeting at Llangynidr on 9 May. Also present was "honorary" member Trevor Wigmore, who provided the main afternoon display of Monmouthshire villages. All of the club members also displayed Monmouthshire items. In the photo standing are John Perry, Stuart Geddes and Neil Jones, with Trevor Wigmore, Martyn Britton and Peter Coldrey seated (photo by Anne Perry).



## **Robert Murray's Stamp Shop & Auction**

Your secretary made two trips to Edinburgh in April to see the grandchildren. This allowed a visit to Robert Murray's Stamp Shop in Ferry Road. Robert is a member of the Scandinavia Philatelic Society, as is your secretary. The shop is a real Aladdin's Cave with boxes of stamps, postcards and covers stacked up everywhere. Robert also runs auctions at the nearby rugby club and I was lucky enough to be in Edinburgh on the Monday evening of his April auction. The auction had a large number of boxes full of mixed collections as well as the more usual sets and singles. Accompanying it was a bid or buy sale with material being brought in on the day. I managed to pick up two auction lots and one on bid or buy. I'll definitely be going again.